

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed May 14, 2009, the Application has been carefully reviewed. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 23-44 are pending in the Application. Request for reconsideration of the Application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

The Examiner has finally rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 12, and 23 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaukeinen et al. (JP 07043978 A) in view of Desie et al. (US 6,246,424 B1); Claim 8 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaukeinen et al. (JP 07043978 A) in view of Desie et al. (US 6,246,424 B1) and further in view of Costrop et al. (US 5,848,339); Claims 23-27 and 30 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaukeinen et al. (JP 07043978 A) in view of Rushing (US 6,671,052 B1); and Claims 23, 28, and 29 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaukeinen et al. (JP 07043978 A) in view of Desie et al. (US 6,246,424 B1) and further in view of Nakazato (US 6,483,997).

It appears that the Examiner has failed to appreciate the differences between Applicants' claimed invention and the cited references. First of all, the Kaukeinen et al. reference shows a plurality of toning station, which in order to accomplish their invention, must be aligned in the direction of travel of the receiver transport path. Therefore, the Kaukeinen et al. reference actually teaches away from the offsetting of plural toning stations as claimed by Applicants as their invention. With regard to the Desie et al. reference, the Examiner appears to be confusing the terms "toning stations" and "toning rollers". As previously noted, the structure of the Desie et al. reference includes a single toning station having multiple toner donating rollers associated with a single toning roller for a singular toning station. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Desie et al. reference can in no way be said to teach multiple offset toning stations as recited in the claims of Applicants' invention. Therefore, even if the structure of the Desie et al. reference could be properly combined with the structure of the Kaukeinen et al. reference when operating in the intended manner, the resultant teachings cannot be read on multiple offset toning stations as claimed herein. As previously noted, the multiple offset toning stations is an important aspect of

Applicants' claimed invention in that it provides an improved uniformity of toner lay down in an extended-width toning apparatus. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that any proper reading of the combination of references as proposed would not teach Applicants' claimed invention or make such invention obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. The references to Costrop et al., Rushing, and Nakazato do not provide the teachings of Applicants' claimed invention noted as missing from the base reference to Kaukeinen et al. Thus, Applicants' invention as recited in Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 23-30 should be considered to patentably distinguish over the cited prior art, or any other prior art known to Applicants, and should now be allowed.

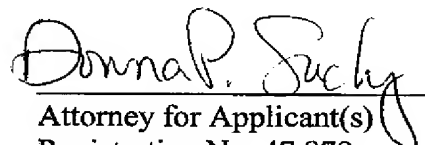
Conclusion

Applicants are not aware of any additional patents, publications, or other information not previously submitted to the Patent and Trademark Office which would be required under 37 C.F.R. §1.99.

It is respectfully submitted that, in view of the above proposed amendments and remarks, this Application is now in condition for allowance, prompt notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner deems the Application to not be in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered as placing the Application in better form for Appeal.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned in the event that a phone interview will expedite prosecution of this application towards allowance.

Respectfully submitted,


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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.